

# To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time

Robert Herrick, 1591 - 1674

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,

Old Time is still a-flying;

And this same flower that smiles today

Tomorrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,

The higher he's a-getting,

The sooner will his race be run,

And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,

When youth and blood are warmer;

But being spent, the worse, and worst

Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,

And while ye may, go marry;

For having lost but once your prime,

You may forever tarry.

Discussion Questions:

1. In “To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time,” what does Herrick say about time and its effects on youth and beauty?
2. Characterize the speaker? What is his overall tone? What is he trying to say?
3. What does the speaker say about marriage?

4. The image of the sun appears in "To the Virgins." How does the poet use the reference to the sun?